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Managing Your Emails More Effectively

For many people, email has evolved from an efficient way to communicate into a source of anxiety, something that eats up tremendous parts of the day

That's not just limited to regular employees. If anything, it can get even more consuming at the top. [Zappos](#) CEO, Tony Hsieh, [writes at LinkedIn](#), "In 2012, I felt like my email had gotten out of control. I felt like it was a never-ending treadmill ..."

He ended up never responding to important emails, and as his email inbox grew bigger, so did his to-do list and email-related anxiety.

In response, Hsieh has created a personal email and productivity system that has significantly reduced his email related stress.

The full system is pretty involved, but the core point is this: **Make yesterday's inbox today's to-do list.** Starting from yesterday has the advantage of letting you know exactly how much you have to get through, and letting you actually get to zero in some way. Here are a few of Hsieh's [rules and tips](#) for making it work.

- If it can wait 48 hours without causing a problem, don't respond to any emails from today.
- Process (delete, reply to, or set a time to respond to) 10 emails from yesterday (even if they're hard or time consuming) before even looking at anything today. That keeps you from jumping straight to the easy ones.
- For any email that takes more than 10 minutes, set a time, just like a meeting, for when you're going to respond, allowing for the time you'll need.

Set aside a recurring appointment/time of day for this process.

Those are just a few of the basics. Hsieh has a full and detailed description [here](#).

It's a system that might not work for everybody, depending on your personal inclinations and workflow. But it's one way to make email systematic, rather than a constant and nagging drag on your day. And it takes away the goal from inbox zero, which, to be honest, is wildly unrealistic for most people.

The key is, even if you don't want to follow Hsieh's exact system, at least be systematic in some way. Otherwise, flipping to the inbox becomes a disruption, distraction, excuse, and a source of constant anxiety.

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/zappos-tony-hsieh-email-system-2013-5#ixzz2U7jvioT4>